



LINDA B. ROSENTHAL
Assemblymember 67th District

THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

CHAIR
Committee on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse

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Task Force on Women's Issues
Legislative Women's Caucus

March 16, 2020

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I am writing to urge you to devise a plan to provide emergency financial relief to independent contractors, domestic workers, freelancers and others who have already lost and will continue to lose work and income as a result of the spread of COVID-19 but would not, under normal circumstances, qualify for unemployment insurance coverage.

While I and my constituents understand that the nature of the COVID-19 virus requires aggressive and mandatory social distancing to protect all of us against its continuing spread. Mandating the closure of all restaurants and bars is a dramatic but absolutely necessary step, yet it will have devastating consequences on workers employed directly in those establishments and a variety of others. Bartenders, restaurant workers, for-hire vehicle drivers, tipped workers and others who are employed in the gig economy will be devastated by any closure. In addition, house cleaners, nannies, hotel workers, home health aides and others in the service or hospitality industry will feel acutely the financial losses associated with prolonged and mandatory social distancing.

Many of these workers already live a paycheck-to-paycheck existence; one missed check can spell immediate disaster for them and their families.

While I am pleased that your Administration acted quickly to waive the seven-day waiting period allowing employees impacted by COVID-19 to immediately qualify for unemployment insurance coverage, there are tens of thousands of domestic workers, freelancers and other independent workers for whom the future is uncertain. As such, I request that you work to create a relief program for these vulnerable workers and their families.

We appreciate your swift action to address these issues of grave concern for vulnerable New Yorkers and their families and look forward to continuing working with you to ensure that every person, regardless of income, is protected during this crisis.

Sincerely,

Linda B. Rosenthal
Member of Assembly – 67 AD